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GUIDE FOR THE TRAINING OF VOLUNTEER NURSES' AIDES



Prepared by the American Red Cross



in Collaboration with the U. S. Office of Civilian Defense



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To meet the anticipated need for the expansion of nursing facilities during the period of the national emergency, the American Red Cross has been asked by the U. S. Office of Civilian Defense to train 100,000 Volunteer Nurses' Aides during the coming year. In a recent letter to the Chairman of the American Red Cross, the Director of the U. S. Office of Civilian Defense stated:

"We are confronted with a steady depletion of the nursing services of hospitals and health departments, due in part to the requirements of our military establishments at a time of rapidly increasing needs for civilian defense . . .

"To meet the emergency needs of the civilian population during the national emergency, I would therefore suggest that the Volunteer Nurses' Aide Corps of the American Red Cross be greatly expanded throughout the country; that the course of instruction be intensified by compressing the present 100-hour course into 6 weeks; that arrangements be made with the executive officers and principals of nurse training schools of important hospitals to collaborate with the American Red Cross in providing practical hospital training to follow the preparatory extra-hospital course of instruction given by the Amer-

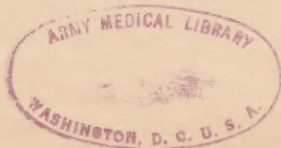
ican Red Cross; . . . that after completion of the period of hospital training, enrollment in the Volunteer Nurses' Aide Corps of the American Red Cross be contingent upon continued service for at least part of each year; and that definite arrangements be made for such continued service in hospitals, outpatient clinics, visiting nurse, public health, school health, and industrial nursing organizations."

This challenge was accepted immediately by the American Red Cross as part of its civilian defense program. The organization of the Volunteer Nurses' Aide Corps throughout the country and the training of approximately 100,000 Nurse's Aides during the coming year has been inaugurated.

In collaboration with the Medical Division of the U. S. Office of Civilian Defense, the curriculum (ARC 774) has been revised to meet national defense needs; the number of hours of instruction has been reduced from 100 to 80, without sacrifice of any essential requirements; the period of time in which these 80 hours of instruction will be given has been shortened to 7 weeks; and the regulations for the organization and administration of the Nurses' Aide Corps have been modified in order to reach the desired objective.

A Defense Volunteer Office will be established

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by each local Office of Civilian Defense, which will serve as a clearing house for all volunteers. Those who meet the eligibility requirements for Nurses' Aides in regard to age, education and availability will be sent to the local Red Cross chapter where they will be carefully selected for the intensive training course. The first half of the course will be given in the local Red Cross chapter house or other suitable place. After completion of this probationary period, instruction will be continued as supervised practice in a hospital which has been selected by the Office of Civilian Defense and the Red Cross as a training center. When the course is satisfactorily completed, the Red Cross will serve as a placement agency for the assignment of the Aides to hospitals, clinics, health departments, school health, and field nursing services. The Red Cross placement service will be guided by the local Chief of Emergency Medical Service, who will keep informed of the needs in all local hospitals, health and field nursing organizations, with the assistance of the Nurses' Aide Committee. A Red Cross certificate and pin, issued by Volunteer Special Services at American Red Cross Area Headquarters will be awarded to the volunteers who complete the course.

The hospitals used as training centers should be on the approved list of the American Medical Association and the American College of Surgeons; the standards of nursing service must be acceptable to a Nurses' Aide Committee set up by the local Red Cross chapter; only general hospitals caring for men, women and children should be selected; and the training center should conform to the policies and rules of the Red Cross and the U. S. Office of Civilian Defense governing the services, duties and assignments of the Aides. Situations meriting special considerations should be acted upon by Area Headquarters of the Red Cross.

Requirements for the Training Course

1. The instructor for the course must be a well-qualified, registered, graduate nurse, authorized annually by the area headquarters of the Red Cross. (Qualifications and application—ARC Form 1529.)

2. Hospitals used as training centers must be on the approved lists of the American Medical Association and the American College of Surgeons. (ARC Form 1901.)
3. A Nurses' Aide Committee which is a subcommittee of the Volunteer Special Services must be set up in each chapter, to be responsible for maintaining standards and discipline and for supervising the service. (ARC Form 1901.)
4. The new eighty (80) hour Syllabus ARC 774 is to be used.
5. Volunteers chosen to take the training must meet stated physical and educational requirements, and must agree to accept regulations concerning future service in the Volunteer Nurses' Aide Corps. (ARC Form 1239A.)
6. A maximum of thirty (30) Aides is allowed in each class.
7. The duties authorized for the service must be adhered to by the local Nurses' Aide Committee and by hospitals and organizations using the volunteers. (See ARC 775.)
8. Each Aide must work under supervision of a nurse and as assistant to a nurse at all times, and never as an independent worker. The service should not supplant that given by paid workers nor should the Volunteer Nurses' Aides be employed in hospitals and clinics to do work which can be performed by untrained volunteers or workers.
9. All Aides must take the Red Cross First Aid Course for Civilian Defense (standard 20-hour course) as soon as possible and in any case by the end of their first year of service. Those who have had a standard first-aid course in the past should take the advanced 10-hour review course.

It is expected that each chapter establishing a Volunteer Nurses' Aide Corps will adhere strictly to the nine basic requirements stated above. Because of the widely diverse situations existing in local communities, it may become necessary for some chapters through the office of their Nurses' Aide Committees to use any practical method

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advisable for meeting special needs and for expediting the training of volunteers so that adequate preparation for emergencies will be assured. Within the framework of these requirements, local organization and cooperation should be governed by local resources and ingenuity. If slight deviations from the rules seem desirable in the organization of the Corps, the problem must be taken up with Area Red Cross Headquarters for consideration.

Office of Civilian Defense Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the local Office of Civilian Defense and the local Chief of Emergency Medical Service are as follows:

1. To assist the Red Cross in recruiting and enrolling desirable applicants for training.
2. To assist the local chapters to conclude arrangements with appropriate general hospitals to serve as training centers.
3. To assist the Red Cross in organizing and maintaining a placement service so that Volunteer Nurses' Aides may continue to serve and to accumulate experience.
4. To reassign Volunteer Nurses' Aides to emergency duty if the need should arise.

Nurses' Aide Committee

Although service in the Volunteer Nurses' Aide Corps is purely a volunteer activity it is also a nursing activity and must maintain standards and discipline which will meet with the approval of the nursing profession. To carry this responsibility each chapter will set up a Nurses' Aide Committee as a subcommittee of its Volunteer Special Services Committee to be composed of nurse and lay representatives and the local Chief of Emergency Medical Service of the Civilian Defense Council. To this Committee will be assigned the responsibility for:

1. Coordinating the Aide service with the program of the local Office of Civilian Defense.
2. Determining local policies.

3. Administering and supervising the training of the Corps.
4. Recruiting for enrollment of volunteers in cooperation with the Office of Civilian Defense.
5. Selecting volunteers meeting Corps requirements in regard to age, education, and availability.
6. Selecting properly qualified nurse instructors.
7. Safeguarding standards.

Requirements for Membership in Volunteer Nurses' Aide Corps

1. Age: Between 18 and 50 years when enrolled.
2. Satisfactory physical condition. (Physical examination requirements must be passed—ARC Form 1239B.)
3. Graduation from high school or equivalent.
4. Satisfactory completion of eighty (80) hour course (ARC 774).
5. *Service must be given without remuneration.*
6. Policies and rules of Corps as defined by U. S. Office of Civilian Defense and the National Red Cross must be accepted.
7. One hundred and fifty hours of service must be given in each calendar year, preferably in a 3-month period. The first 150 hours of service must be spent on hospital wards before assignment is made to clinics and field nursing organizations.
8. In time of war or other national emergency, Volunteer Nurses' Aides must be prepared to serve whenever and for as long a period as needed.

Because there is no way of telling *now* how great the present national emergency may become nor how much time and work may be required of the Volunteer Nurses' Aide, it is of the utmost importance that applicants be chosen with care and made to realize that they are enrolling in a Corps which may require a great devotion to duty on their part.



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Much emphasis must be laid on physical fitness, emotional stability, mental alertness, and adaptability to unexpected situations and to new ways of doing things, as well as to the absolute necessity of accepting the discipline of the Corps.

Applicants need not hesitate to become members of the Corps if they cannot leave their own communities in times of emergency. Aides will be needed on the Home Front as much as elsewhere, but they must be prepared to give generously of their time during a period of great need.

Uniform and Insignia

The uniform which is to be worn after the first 34 hours of the course (Unit I) by the Volunteer Nurses' Aides trained for service in Civilian Defense is a blue cotton jumper apron, worn over a regulation white blouse, plainly tailored and inexpensive.

An OCD insignie will be worn on the left sleeve. This consists of a red cross on the white triangle within a blue circle to indicate that the Aide has been enrolled and trained by the Red Cross for Civilian Defense.

A cap, made of the same blue material as the uniform, with a facing of white, will be worn after the course is satisfactorily completed. Insignie will be placed on the white band, center front.

The Red Cross Volunteer Nurses' Aide pin may be worn at neck to fasten the collar. The pin may also be worn when out of uniform if placed on the left breast.

The Curriculum

The Syllabus (ARC 774) is a revision of the material which has been used by instructors of Red Cross courses for Volunteer Nurses' Aides since July 1940. It has been revised with the assistance of the Medical Division of the U. S. Office of Civilian Defense, to meet the anticipated need for an expansion of nursing facilities during the period of the National Emergency. The instructional material is presented in outline form only. No attempt has been made to cover each subject exhaustively. It is expected that the in-

structor will draw upon her own knowledge and experience to elaborate on the outline and to interpret properly the subject to the class.

Volunteer Nurses' Aide Course:

Two units—Total time 80 hours.

Unit I. Care of the Sick in the Hospital----- 34 hours.

(One hour of lecture and demonstration and one or more hours of practice daily, five days a week.)

Unit I may be given in the local Red Cross chapter house or other suitable and properly equipped room.

Unit II. Supervised Practice in the Hospital----- 45 hours.
(Three hours a day for five days a week.)

Unit II is to be given in a hospital designated for this purpose as a training center for Volunteer Nurses' Aides.

Examination----- 1 hour.

ADDRESS OF NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS AND

JURISDICTIONS AND ADDRESSES OF AREA OFFICES

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS: 17th and D Streets NW., Washington, D. C.

EASTERN AREA: 615 North St. Asaph Street, Alexandria, Virginia:

Alabama, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia.

MIDWESTERN AREA: 1709 Washington Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri:

Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, Wisconsin, Wyoming.

PACIFIC AREA: Civic Auditorium, Larkin and Grove Streets, San Francisco, California:

Alaska, Arizona, California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington.

INSULAR AND FOREIGN OPERATIONS: 17th and D Streets NW., Washington, D. C.:

Canal Zone, Guam, Hawaii, Philippine Islands, Puerto Rico, Samoa, Virgin Islands.